October 15, 2014

Tutor: Tamika Riggs

Student: Jack French Age: 10 Grade: 4

Context for lesson: The first week I met Jack, I brought several books for him to choose from. Immediately, he gravitated toward a book by Mary Pope Osborne called *Mummies in the Morning*. He told me he had read some of her books before and he really wanted to start with this particular book.

The book has ten chapters in it so I decided that we would read about three chapters each week.

This was our second week reading the book so our focus was on chapters 4-7.

Before we started reading, I asked him to retell what we had read so far. I asked him to remind me of some of the key information, people and places we learned about in chapters 1-3. Then we transitioned into reading chapters 4-7.

What is your teaching point in the area reading?

Teaching Point #1: Read in meaningful, fluent phrases.

Jack is aware that he sometimes reads really fast which sounds like mumbling. As a result, we came up with a signal—snapping to help Jack to go back and reread the word or sentence slowly and clearly.

Where are you in Optimal Learning Model?

The Optimal Learning Model I used in this video is shared reading. This shared reading time allows for an interactive reading experience to guide Jack through the reading process. Also, this shared experience assists Jack in making connections between background information and new information as well as gain new vocabulary.

In this video, I only included segments of Jack reading; however we actually take turns reading one page at a time. This shared experience gives Jack the opportunity to hear me read fluently. While Jack reads, I’m able to gently remind him to slow down and read intentionally by snapping. Also, we periodically discuss the text to make meaningful connections about what we’ve read.

What are three strengths in your use teacher language? Key your discussion to specific places in the video.

* 00:49 and 4:08 I offered Jack the option of whether or not he wanted to read. I think offering him choice is important to making this an enjoyable experience for him. We talked a little about this in class when we discussed the topic of round robins. I don’t think a student should be forced to read aloud but given the option.

Plus, I want Jack to feel a sense of control in our sessions. It’s not just to benefit my learning but to enhance his as well. I also think just this small gesture will make this time more meaningful for him.

* 00:58. I help Jack decode the word “scepter”. He didn’t know this word at all. After a few attempts, I asked him if he recognized any part of the word. Next, I covered the first and last part of the word with my finger and invited him to identify just those pieces. Finally, I had him put the two parts together and he was able to get it.

The reason I highlighted this part is because before this class, I would’ve just given him the word yet not the ability to figure it out himself. I’m glad I learned these simple techniques because you could tell that he felt really good about figuring out the word for himself. But at the same time, I need to be more comfortable with just letting the child struggle and not immediately try to save them.

* 02:44 This was the first time I used the snapping signal that Jack and I came up with to remind him to slow down and read more intentionally. I put just the first time on here because there are several more times throughout the video that I used this signal.

Jack’s reading goal, which he identified, is to slow down and stop mumbling as he reads. In an effort to help him achieve this goal, I wanted a way to remind him as he reads to be more deliberate yet do so in a less disruptive manner so we came up with the snapping cue.

As you can tell, it really works. Once Jack hears me snap, he automatically knows to go back to the start of the sentence, slow down and read each word intentionally.

What is one area in which you want to improve? Why?

* 00:1.37. I invited Jack to retell what we had read in the first three chapters. I felt like he really struggled with this. So, I asked him questions to try to probe him yet I feel I could’ve asked better questions. Also, I pretty much summed up his ideas instead of having him do it.

I realized after watching this that retelling is so much more than just having him restate the facts which is what I was mostly interested in. I need to find a way to help him be able to make personal connections and predictions about the text.

* 5:58. I stopped between chapters 6 and 7 to give him the opportunity to tell me what happened so far. I feel that he did a much better job this time. It could be because the information was fresh in his mind but I felt that he was able to recapture the important components of the reading. In addition, he offered his opinion about how he felt about the boat symbol. He said “I don’t think it looked like a boat” which lets me know that he’s able to relate the text to himself.

What steps will you take to improve between now and the next video recording?

My goal is to improve my own understanding of the importance of retelling and give Jack the opportunity to practice and improve his ability to retell.

1. I will include opportunities for me to model retelling.
2. Ask him better questions to help him connect the text to his world.

How will you know you’ve improved? What evidence will you look for?

I will know I have improved because Jack and I will be more comfortable and expressive when retelling something we’ve read.

What else did you notice that you didn’t realize about your teaching? How do you feel about it?

I noticed that I am effortlessly integrating much of what we’ve learned into my teaching. For instance, when I asked Jack to retell the story, I felt compelled to ask him questions that helped him go into more depth about his reading.

Also, when he came to the word that he didn’t recognize, I instantly knew what to do. Before, I would’ve given him the answer and moved on but I really wanted to equip him with the tools he could use to figure it out on his own.